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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002195

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AA EAID IZ MOPS PHUM PREF PREL TU WFP

SUBJECT: NGO-IO COORDINATION MEETING IN ANKARA, 2 APRIL

This cable was drafted by DART and cleared by Embassy.

Summary

11. (U) UN OCHA hosted an NGO/IO coordination meeting on 2 April at UN House in Ankara. UN OCHA, UNHCR, UNDP, UNJLC, IFRC, the American Red Cross, nine NGOs and DART Field Office/North attended. The UN reported that food and non-food items transited the Turkish-Iraqi border on 29 March and 1 April, and that additional food items are scheduled for delivery to northern Iraq the week of 6 April. NGOs report no progress on their registration with the Turkish government (GOT) to either provide humanitarian assistance in Turkey or transit through to provide assistance in northern Iraq. NGOs continue to look at other options for entering Iraq. UN reports that local staff in northern Iraq have begun some assessment work, and UNSECOORD is prepared to begin a security assessment there when clearances are given.

UN Update

12. (U) UN reported that on 31 March three WFP trucks carrying wheat, soy and milk powder (WSM) transited into northern Iraq. On 1 April two UNICEF trucks carrying HTH Chloride and medical kits transited. Both shipments went to UN warehouses in Dohuk. WFP currently has 70 additional truckloads of wheat flour scheduled for delivery the week of 6 April. The flour will be transported to Dohuk, and eventually on to Arbil and Sulaimaniyah.

13. (U) UN Operational Support Center for Turkey has a staff member assigned to the GOT Crisis Center in Diyarbakir. UN reports that MFA is requesting one-week notice for its staff wishing to travel to southeastern Turkey. UN also noted that no travel is allowed beyond Diyarbakir without proper registration with the GOT. The border is closed to journalists.

14. (U) UN reports that it has contacted the GOT to discuss a humanitarian corridor into northern Iraq. At the same time, they continue to investigate the possibility of using a Syrian corridor to move humanitarian supplies into Iraq. Transit and port fees in Syria remain an issue.

NGO Issues

15. (U) ID cards and who issues them remain concerns for NGOs planning to work in northern Iraq. DART reported that the issues are also being discussed in Amman and Kuwait. NGOs currently in Turkey are in favor of using their own organizations, ID cards, and not those issued by the U.S. military.

16. (SBU) NGOs report no progress in the GOT registration process. One NGO representative has left Turkey and will monitor the process from elsewhere in the region. Another NGO representative is scheduled to leave on 5 April, and yet another has been instructed by headquarters to leave the week of 6 April if no progress is reported. UN reported that the

MFA and other GOT offices might meet to discuss the NGO registration process. (Note: In a trilateral meeting between GOT, UN and USG on 3 April, MFA reported that permits to transit Turkey to work in northern Iraq will soon be granted to at least some of the NGOs that had filed applications to do so.)

¶17. (SBU) An NGO looking at the possibility of using the Syrian corridor for entering northern Iraq was informed by contacts in Damascus that the corridor is closed to all except those who previously received permission to travel this route. NGOs continue to investigate this avenue, however, as they receive conflicting information from contacts in northern Iraq. Iran remains a possible entry point for some. DART reported that Air Serv International, currently contracted to provide air transport services to USAID/OFDA, may be a better alternative for entering northern Iraq if transiting Turkey is not allowed. U.S. military transport was also mentioned as a possibility.

¶18. (U) UN informed NGOs that those wishing to partner with UN agencies in northern Iraq should contact the UN information management officer in Larnaca, Mr. Giorgio Saroti, for information on which UN agency would be appropriate for the NGO. UN currently has sector working groups in northern Iraq that collaborate with local committees that review NGOs seeking to provide assistance in their area. NGOs approved are then required to register with local authorities.

Northern Iraq Update

¶19. (U) UNSECOORD is awaiting clearances from Larnaca and Ankara (to transit) to conduct a security assessment of the Kurdish-controlled region of Iraq. Two four-person teams are prepared to begin the assessment in Dohuk when clearances are received.

¶10. (U) UNICEF local staff in northern Iraq have begun assessments on the IDP and water/sanitation issues in the region.

¶11. (SBU) UN OCHA reports that fuel is being imported into northern Iraq from Iran. Supplies have improved, but prices remain high.

Future Meetings

¶12. (U) The next NGO/IO coordination meeting will be held at UNHCR on 9 April at 1400 hrs. DART will attend.

PEARSON